

THORNS 'N ROSES

From community submissions

Roses to:

Patch and Kelley fitness centers for extending their operating hours. The extra time is appreciated! (See "Stuttgart Beat," page 3.)

Stuttgart's USO staff for adding cards, photographs, clothing and other concessions to their assortment of retail merchandise.

All the Wonderful Wednesday instructors who took leave and volunteered their time to instruct Garmisch youth in skiing and snowboarding. The difference you made extends far beyond the sports skills you passed along to the youth.

Thorns to:

Drivers who speed through school zones. Though it may seem inconvenient to you, the speed limit in these areas is 10 kph. Obey the law before your neglect causes someone to be seriously hurt.

Drivers who pass buses on post. This has become a constant problem outside Böblingen Elementary School on Panzer Kaserne.

Let's make this clear: Not only is passing a school bus dangerous activity, it is also illegal on U.S. military installations.

(For more about this issue see the "traffic safety reminder" on page 4.)

E-mail comments to citizen@6asg.army.mil or fax them to 421-2570/civ. 0711-729-2570.

THE CITIZEN

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The Citizen is an offset press publication printed in 6,500 copies every two weeks.

www.stuttgart.army.mil

Honesty, simplicity help kids cope with parents' deployment

By Lt. Cmdr. Stella Hayes
Branch Medical Clinic, Naples

One of the biggest worries deploying service members have is for their children. How will their children cope with their parent's absence and uncertain safety? Is there anything you can say or do to help your children in the face of deployment or other traumatic events?

The National Association of School Psychologists advises, "The guidance of caring adults will make the difference between being overwhelmed and developing life-long emotional and psychological coping skills."

"Children have vivid imaginations, and if they are young enough and imaginative enough, they tend to think that they are at the center of all things, that they are the cause of all actions, good or bad," said Dr. Lillian Miller, a clinical psychologist at the Fleet and Family Support Center, Naples, Italy.

"It is better to tell them of impending changes in their family life, because if they aren't prepared ahead of time, they may blame themselves for a parent's absence."

Children, like all of us, do better in stressful situations if they are forewarned. If you are deploying, it is best to discuss it – as soon as you know for older children, closer to the event for younger children.

Miller said a deploying service member might tell a young child, "Mommy has a job far away and your friend, Ms. Kelly, will be taking care of you until I

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Dr. Lillian Miller

Fleet and Family Support Center, Naples

come back. I will try to call you on Sundays, but if I cannot call, I will write you every week. I will miss you very much."

"Try not to make promises that you cannot keep," Miller said, "like 'I will be home for your birthday.'"

Children often take emotional cues from the adults around them – especially parents. Thus, it is important for a parent to remain calm and respond to children's concerns in a controlled and reasonable manner.

Help provide a sense of stability and security by maintaining normal routines. Remind children of day-to-day events that will not change: School will continue, the house will not change and they will still sleep in their own beds.

Children may need guidance on what to believe about war and world events.

"Take your child's lead and talk on a level appropriate to his or her developmental level," Miller said.

"If they are old enough to be reading about and discussing the events leading up to a war, then refer to people or countries or events by specific name. If they are too young to know the spe-

cifics, try to get them to explain what they think or know and then correct any misunderstandings at their level."

With small children, Miller recommends avoiding using a term like "bad," as children are used to hearing this applied to themselves or other children and may assume that if they are "bad," similar measures may be taken against them.

For difficult questions such as, "Are you going to die?" answer a young child simply and truthfully. "I don't know. I hope not, because I want to return to be a part of this family and watch you grow up. My friends and I are going to do everything we can to make sure we come back safely as soon as possible."

Finally, Miller said, "Knowledge can be helpful, I believe, in terms of preparation for possible war – but the assurance of a deploying parent's care, enduring love and intention to return and rejoin the family as soon as possible can go a long way toward calming a child's reasonable fears."

For more about deployment-related issues turn to pages 12 and 13.

From the Commander

Stellar effort by all earns JSIVA praise

To all 6th ASG staff and tenant units:

The JSIVA is over, and it was an absolute success.

For those of you who may not be familiar with this process, JSIVA is the Joint Staff Integrated Vulnerability Assessment. During this critical review, a team of analysts assesses a military installation's vulnerabilities to terrorist attacks.

JSIVA members inspect both the physical security and the written contingency operation plans in place.

The team offers expert advice regarding a broad range of force protection issues, and shares its insights with commanders and key leaders to ensure the utmost in safety for the community.

On March 14, we received our outbrief from the JSIVA team. It is my pleasure to let you know that they were extremely laudatory regarding this community's planning and execution of force protection measures.

I have seen incredible progress made since our last JSIVA. The only reason we did so well this time around was because of the team efforts of each and every one of you and your subordinates.

Please accept this note of congratulations with the realization that we nevertheless cannot let up in our force protection efforts, especially with the world situation the way it is.

Thank you for your efforts. I am extremely happy with what we have achieved together, and proud to be a part of such a wonderful community.

So much that is precious to us is counting on our continued hard work and diligence.

Though the assessment is now behind us, the global war on terrorism continues. We must remain vigilant at all times, adhere to all force protection standards and report any suspicious activity immediately.

Just as it took a complete community effort to do well on the JSIVA, it will take the same effort each and every day to ensure the continued security of our installations and safety of our community members.

Thank you again for your efforts. I am extremely happy with what we have achieved together, and proud to be a part of such a wonderful community.

Col. Larry Stubblefield
6th Area Support Group commander